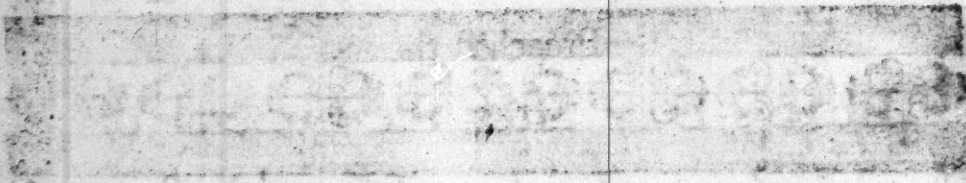


A
FUNERAL SERMON.

On the DEATH of

Madam *Hutchinson.*





TUNER AL SER MON



THE Character and Hope of the Righteous
Consider'd, in a
S E R M O N
Preach'd the
LORD'S-DAY after the Funeral of
Madam Lydia Hutchinson,
THE
VIRTUOUS CONSORT
OF THE HONOURABLE
Edward Hutchinson, Esq;
Who departed this Life, *July 10. 1748.*
Aged 61.

By *Samuel Checkley, A. M.*
Pastor of the second Church of CHRIST in *Boston.*

Isaiah 3. 10. *Say ye to the Righteous, it shall be well with him.*

Job 19. 25, 26, 27. *For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter Day upon the Earth; and though after my Skin, Worms destroy this Body, yet in my Flesh, shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, and mine Eyes behold, and not not another, though my Reins be consumed within me.*

B O S T O N : N. E. Printed by J. DRAPER,
for D. HENCHMAN, in Cornhill. 1748.

THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY
CHURCH

21st Nov 1891

For the purpose of the Festival of
Thanksgiving

VERBODEN TOEGANG
TO THE CHURCH

From 11 o'clock till
1 o'clock



By order of the
Trustees

THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY
CHURCH

21st Nov 1891

For the purpose of the Festival of
Thanksgiving

MEMORIAL



To the Honourable

Edward Hutchinson, Esq;

S I R,

THE late distressing Providence of God in your Family was the Occasion of the following Sermon. The Relation in which I stand to that Church which your deceased Consort adorn'd, I thought, called upon me to bear Testimony for her Virtues, and so to do Honour to divine Grace, which wrought them in her Soul.

†*†

It

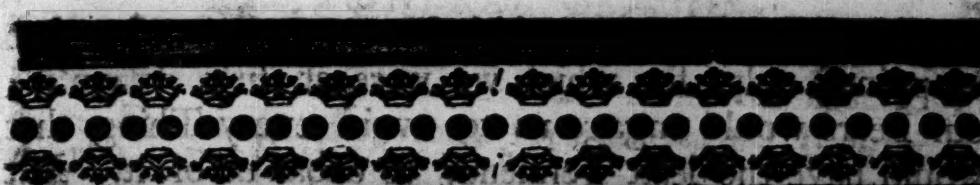
It must be, *Sir*, that you sustain a great Loss, how great no one but yourself can conceive of. The long Continuance with which God favoured you together, no doubt made the Parting more sorrowful, and raised the Springs of Grief : But as you lived in Hopes, we believe you parted in Hopes of another and better Meeting. May this Consideration be a mighty Support to your Spirits. May you glorify God in your exalted Station and advanced Age, and at last, with all your's, possess the unfading Honours and superior Pleasures of the beatifick State.

This is the hearty Prayer

Of, *Sir*, your devoted,

Humble Servant,

Samuel Checkley.



A

FUNERAL SERMON.

PROVERBS XIV. 32.

--- *The Righteous hath Hope in his Death.*

H OPE and Fear are the two governing Principles in humane Nature ; accordingly if we examine the Actions of Men, and trace them to their Fountain, we shall find that either their Hopes or their Fears were the Occasion of them. Whatever Methods Men are in the Prosecution of, it is the Hope of some Benefit that lies at the Foundation, Fear and Sollicitude least they should miss of their Aim, are equally influential. These Principles are deeply rivited in the Breast of every Creature, in whom God hath enkindled the Light of Reason ; and it is a great Favour vouchsafed to us by the Author of our Beings that these Springs of Actions are so deeply rooted within us. And was it not that our Taste for true Happiness is vitiated, these Principles would be productive of the most glorious Effects :

Effects: Our Hopes would influence us to pursue the Happiness only, for which we were at first design'd; our Fears would engage us to avoid every Thing that would have the least Tendency to debar us of it. But alas, the Case is quite otherwise; tho' all are governed by the same Principles, yet they are not directed to right Ends. Tho' all have a Principle of Hope, yet it is not founded upon a right Bottom, it is not excited from a View of the true substantial Nature of Happiness; nor doth it produce those good Effects which a Hope rightly founded would do. In the same manner we may argue concerning the Principle of Fear, it is not moved from an Apprehension of the necessary and unalterable Evil which there is in Sin, and so doth not bring forth those genuine Fruits, which a religious Fear always does.— But then you will say, Wherein appears the Advantage of these interwoven Principles, if some are actually disserved by them? We reply, That because some are not suitably influenced by their Hopes and Fears, it will not follow, that they are of no Service: We may as well argue against the Principle of Reason it self, and say, that because some Men act irrationally, Reason is not so great a Favour, as many imagine. Should these secret Springs of Action lead us to pursue our future, everlasting Welfare, should we not esteem them Favours, and bless God for them. It is thro' our own Default that they loose their good Effect upon us. But then you will say further, What is the Reason that we are not suitably influenced by these inbred Principles? Did not God at first make Man, with a natural Inclination to prosecute his own Happiness? We answer, That Man was at first made with a serious Desire after that Felicity God designed him for; but the Truth of the Case is, the Views of Man are very much changed by his Fall, he is mistaken in his Apprehensions of true Blessedness, he takes that to be for his greatest Advantage and Comfort, which if depended upon, will prove the greatest Infelicity

Infelicity to him. This is evident from the Practice of Men, and while they form this immature Judgment, they will necessarily pursue Happiness in a wrong Path. —Perhaps you may add further, Doth not Man desire that which will make him really happy? We answer, That an unregenerate Man doth not desire or hope to be happy, for the Sake of any real positive Good which there is in Happiness; all the Happiness he desires is a Freedom from Pain and Misery; and tho' he would not dare to tell you, that he should not like to dwell in God's Presence; yet his Practice plainly declares that he would take no Satisfaction in it. Those who hope for true substantial Happiness upon good Grounds, are such whose Hope is purified, who are wrought upon by the Spirit of God, and made to see the real intrinsic Excellency of Happiness. All such have a good Hope, they are among the Righteous in the Text, who have a Hope, that is a great Support to their Spirits, amidst the various Calamities of Life, yea, even in Death itself. Is it not to be feared of the Multitudes that entertain Hopes of Happiness, great Numbers are deceiving themselves with false Hopes; they compass themselves about with Sparks of their own kindling. Some have a Hope that is built only upon the Mercy of God; of this Sort are all openly wicked Persons; some hope for Happiness on the account of their religious Performances, of this Sort are all Hypocrites in Religion; some hope for the Mercy of God through Faith in Christ's Righteousness, of this Sort are those mentioned in the Text. Seeing then that the greatest Part of the Christian World are Self-deceivers, what Care should we all take that our Hopes be well established. You may be deceived, and so may I: If either of us should, what dreadful Horror and Disappointment will seize us at Death, and in the Day of Judgment! Let us in the Fear of God attend to the following Particulars;

First. Let us consider *the Character of the righteous Man.*

Secondly. Let us consider *the Nature and Effects of this righteous Man's Hope.*

Thirdly. Let us especially take a View *of this Hope as exercis'd at Death.*

Fourthly. Consider, *None but a righteous Man can have a good Hope.*

First. Let us consider *the Character of the righteous Man* in the Text.

It is peculiar to all God's Children that they are righteous. This doth not mean, that they are absolutely and perfectly righteous, for as all have sinned, so all have lost the moral Rectitude of their Natures; and tho' there is a great Difference between the present and former State of God's Children, yet they can't be supposed to be universally righteous. Notwithstanding the Change made in them, they commit many Sins, there are many Defects in their Obedience. God sees Sin in his own Children, and punisheth them for it, as the Scriptures and Christian Experience testify. How dangerous is it then for any to espouse that Soul-ruining Principle, that Believers are free from Sin in this Life. The Righteousness of Believers consists in several Things, which we shall mention.

First, It is an *imputed Righteousness.* God having accepted the Sacrifice and Satisfaction of his Son, imputes his Righteousness to their Souls, on the Account of which He as freely accepts them, as he did his Son's Obedience. *For as by one Man's Disobedience, many were made Sinners; so by the Obedience of one, (i. e. Christ,) shall many be made righteous.* Rom. 5. 19. Thro' the Fall of our first Parents, we are all become guilty

guilty and unrighteous. *There is none that doeth good, no not one.* Psal. 14. 1. We are rightly called *a Seed of Evil-doers* : We have broken Covenant with God, and stand condemned to die in a spiritual Sense. The Law and Justice of God have their Demands upon us ; and it is impossible that we should stand right in God's Eyes, considered in ourselves, as we did before our Fall ; i. e. that we should yield that perfect Obedience which the Law requires ; or, could we do it, yet as God hath a Right to all our Service, our perfect Obedience would be but present Duty, and no ways atone for past Neglect. But Christ, as our Surety, hath undertaken for us. *He hath been made Sin for us, who knew no Sin, that we might be made the Righteousness of God in him,* 2 Cor. 5. 21. God hath been pleased to declare Himself ready to receive Sinners, to restore them to his Love and Favour through Christ. The Righteousness of Christ is perfect and compleat. The Scheme of Redemption was admirably well contrived and calculated to do Honour to God's Law : Christ being a divine Person, his Righteousness is fully and everlastingly satisfactory : Nothing could be done in a way of Suffering that could make the Law appear more honourable ; the eternal Damnation of the Sinner in Hell would not do so much Honour as the Sufferings of Christ : These have paid a full Satisfaction ; but the other never would pay it in full. — It is for the Sake of what Christ hath done, that any are made righteous. We are afraid there are many that talk of Justification by Christ's Righteousness, that know not what they say, nor whereof they affirm. For the Help of such we would say, that by the Righteousness of Christ is meant, his active and passive Obedience to the Law ; it is this that God imputes to the Sinner. — But then, Is there no Condition of Justification ? Do all share equally in the Priviledge ? We answer, No.—Many, notwithstanding that Righteousness which Christ hath wrought out, remain in a State

of Sin and Condemnation ; and in this State they will remain, till in the Exercise of Faith, they are enabled to embrace this Righteousness as their's, and build their Hopes upon it. Let the Scripture decide the Matter, *He that believeth shall be saved : He that believeth not shall be damned,* Mark 16. 16.

The Righteous in the Text are those that have seen their doleful Condition by the Fall, as they lie open to the Stroke of Justice, in the Execution of the Threatening of the Law. They are brought to see in themselves nothing but Sin and Unrighteousness, and to acknowledge the Justice of God, if he should bring the whole threatened Punishment upon them, even everlasting Misery. Being brought to this humbling Sense, they see a surprising Beauty and Fitness in that Righteousness which the Word of God reveals and offers. As it is offered to the Acceptance of all in general, they confidently lay hold of it as their own, and plead it before God : “ O, says the Sinner, “ My own Righteousness is as filthy
 . “ Rags, it can do nothing but condemn me : How then
 “ shall I be able to appear before my Judge now, and
 “ in the great Day ? Blessed be God that Christ my
 “ dear Saviour hath wrought out a Righteousness for
 “ me, and offers it to me. Lord, I accept this thine
 “ Offer : Lord give me Strength to lay hold of this
 “ Righteousness ; for on this I depend only to divert
 “ thine Anger, and procure thy Smiles. ” God hereupon justifies the Sinner, He looks upon him as a righteous Person, and gives him to taste the Sweetness of pardoning Mercy and Grace. In this Sense are the Righteous justified.

But then, They may be called Righteous, as the Image of God is instamped on them. They are made holy. This Holiness hath no Hand in Justification ; it is that by which they are afterwards made meet for Heaven.

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The Image of God, which is created in Righteousness and true Holiness, is refix'd upon them. They follow hard after Holiness. They don't think that Christ's bringing himself under Obligations to obey the Law, makes void their Obligations. No : They esteem themselves under more strict Engagements still to be holy : All the Powers of their Minds are sanctified, their Hearts are purified, they have holy Thoughts and Dispositions ; and from the holy Principles within, they are influenced to maintain holy Lives. Sanctification always accompanies our being justified. By this we mean more than a Pharisaical Righteousness, or visible Conformity to the Law. Those who are justified are changed in the Temper of their Minds ; it will not suffice them that they are outwardly religious ; they will endeavour to bring all their Thoughts, Purposes and Resolutions under the Regulation of God's holy Oracles.

If we take Righteousness to be common Justice and Equity, the Persons mentioned in the Text are righteous in this Sense. They look upon themselves under Obligations to do Justice to all around them. They will be true to their Word and Promise ; and endeavour to give all their Due. They labour to keep a Conscience void of Offence towards Man, as well as towards God. They have other Things to move them to this, besides the just Debt due to their Neighbour, as, the Honour of Christ and his Religion, which lie very near their Hearts.

Secondly. We are to consider *the Nature and Effects of the righteous Man's Hope.* *The Righteous hath Hope,* says the Text. Hope in general, is an Expectation to receive some future Good ; it supposeth that there is a Probability of obtaining it, and it puts the Soul upon endeavouring after it. This Good is something future, for we cannot hope for that we are already in
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the Possession of: There is likewise a Prospect of coming at the Good hoped for, else no reasonable Creature can hope to obtain it. True, we may desire that which we have no reasonable Hope for; but we cannot upon Grounds hope for all that we desire. That which the righteous Man hopes for is in special spiritual Blessings. As to some of the Blessings of the Covenant, as Peace Pardon and Reconciliation, these he already possesseth and he many times rejoiceth in a Sense of them: His Hope is especially carried out after the other Priviledges of the Covenant, as perfect Freedom from all Sin and Trouble, the full Fruition of God, and the immediate Vision of Christ.

This Hope is founded upon the Mercy of God, thro' Christ, and a comfortable Sense that we have been enabled to comply with the Terms of Salvation. The Work of Redemption, and the Application of it to the Souls of Sinners, is all of free Grace. Those who are saved have nothing to boast of, the Crown must be set on the Redeemer's Head, and that be the Language, *Not unto us, not unto us, Lord; but unto thy Name be all the Glory*. God is gracious and full of Compassion; He hath rich Blessings stored up in his Son Jesus Christ, to bestow upon poor perishing Sinners: There is not one Sinner but is welcome to them all. He offers Christ to be their's; and if Christ is their's, then all Things will become their's. The righteous Man with Astonishment looks upon this Love and Grace, and hopes in the Mercy of God, that He will at last put him in the Possession of the whole of that Happiness which Christ hath purchased.— But then his Hope is not built barely upon the Mercy of God. It is to be feared that many have no other Foundation than this, to rest this Hopes upon; and verily this considered alone is no Foundation in our present fallen State. We have all forfeited God's gracious Regards, and we must submit to his
Terms

Terms; before we can hope for his Favour. God hath in his infinite Wisdom contrived, and by his almighty Power effected a Way to reinstate many in the Enjoyment of all positive Happiness: The Condition is, Believing in Christ, accepting Him as a Prophet, Priest and King. This Method of Salvation is every Way worthy of the Perfections of God; and suited to Man's reasonable Nature. We dare not say, that God could not have found out any other Way; but as He hath seen fit to pitch upon this Method, we ought to conclude that it is the best Way.—The righteous Man hath heartily complied with this Method of Salvation, and therefore it is that he entertains Hopes of future Happiness:—He finds by an Examination into his own Heart, that the Spirit of Christ hath been at Work upon his Soul, accomplishing the Designs of God's Grace. He hath had a Discovery of the Necessity of a Saviour, the King of a Saviour, and the Suitableness of the Saviour for him: He hath been made willing to receive Christ upon any Terms; and as that is the Gospel Call, *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved*, he hath cried to God for this Faith, and God hath given him Power to believe. He finds that he can trust freely and entirely to Christ's Satisfaction for Acceptance with, and the Approbation of God: He finds within himself a free Disposition to submit to Christ's Laws and Commandments: He no longer consults Flesh and Blood for the Rule of his Conduct, but gives himself up to the Word and Spirit of Christ, to be led and guided all the Days of his Life.—Finding these Things wrought within him, he lifts up the Hands that hang down and strengthens the feeble Knees: He hopes in God with Freedom and Confidence, for the Bestowment of present and future Good; and verily what spiritual Good may not a Soul hope for, that can find such Dispositions as these. It must be perfectly pleasing to God to see the Sinner thus submitting himself to Him; for it is what
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He hath commanded and called upon him to do. God gives the Sinner the fullest Assurance in his Word, that his Hopes shall not fail him ; but that he shall before long come to the Perfection of Happiness in the upper World of Glory.

Let us consider some of the *good Effects* of this *Hope* of the righteous Man : And here we may learn whether our Hopes are of the right Kind.

First, It is of a *purifying Nature*. All those who are possessed of it endeavour to *cleanse themselves from all Filthiness, both of Flesh and Spirit*, and to *perfect Holiness in the Fear of God*. The Apostle *John* says, 1 Joh. 3. 3. *He that hath this Hope in him, purifieth himself even as God is pure.* *John* is here speaking of the wonderful Love of God in taking any of the Sons of Men into a filial Relation to himself, and of that Vision and blessed Likeness to which adopted Ones shall be advanced in the coming World ; and from hence he argues that the Children of God, who have Hopes of being at last with him, will endeavour to purify themselves, and to be prepared to enjoy an holy God. And certainly, there is no one that really hopes for the Enjoyment of God in Heaven, but will endeavour to get into a Meetness for it here. Sin is a Separation from God, and the Glories of his Kingdom ; and the more we are freed from Sin, we shall be the more pleasing to God, and shall rejoice more in being present with him. And if Believers hope for the Happiness of the heavenly World, Holiness of Heart and Life will be much upon their Minds. Sensible of the Body of Sin which is in them, they will endeavour to mortify the Deeds of the Body, to withstand their corrupt Inclinations, and live under the Influence of a Principle of Grace and Holiness. If we hope for any particular Thing, we shall endeavour to remove every Thing that will obstruct our Enjoyment of it ; and if

we

e hope for Heaven, we shall carefully avoid every thing that will tend to shut us out of Heaven ; and Sin is the greatest Hindrance to our Happiness, sure- we shall endeavour to forsake it, and all Appearance of it.

Secondly, A good Hope makes the Soul *humble* before God. Humility is inseparably connected with the character of a true Christian. That Method of Salvation with which he hath complied, tends in the very Nature of it, to abase and humble the Pride of Man ; and in whomsoever Pride bears an habitual Sway, we may conclude, that such an one is not under the Dominion of suitable Principles. Every true Christian will acknowledge himself unworthy of the least Favour at God's Hands ; and if God hath vouchsafed so great a Favour as to give him a Title to everlasting Blessedness, he will not think too highly of himself. All his Boasting will be in God, and not in himself : He will not think he more deserving than another ; but that he is equally undeserving ; and this will make him lie low before God and Men. " What, says the Believer, shall I grow
 " proud and conceited, because God hath given me a
 " Title to Blessedness here and hereafter, when I de-
 " serve the opposite of both ? Shall I think myself bet-
 " ter than my Neighbour, because God hath in his
 " Sovereignty thus distinguished me ? Lord, let it be
 " far from me : Give me the Ornament of a meek and
 " humble Spirit, which is of great Price in thy Sight." A good Hope, as to an earthly Inheritance, may make us think highly of ourselves ; but a good Hope of an heavenly Inheritance will make us meek and lowly in Heart, meek and lowly in our Carriage towards others.

Thirdly, The good Hope of the Righteous *is* from *this World*. This, and the other World, are quite different in the Happiness they afford. The Com-

fort of the present Life is but transitory, at the best the more we indulge ourselves in it, the more it will take our Hearts off from the Happiness of the other. The Satisfaction of the upper World are sure and abiding. If then we have a just Title to the Blessedness of Heaven, it will teach and influence us to set lightly by all Things here below. If our Treasure is in Heaven our Hearts will be where our Treasure is ; and consequently Believers will converse mostly with heavenly Things. “ What, says the Christian, have I an enduring Substance in Heaven, that is of more Value than all this World ; and shall I then set my Heart upon any Thing below the Sun ? Shall I have heavenly Riches, and at the same Time be fond of worldly Wealth ? Shall I have heavenly Honours, and court the Honour that cometh from Man ? Am I entitled to heavenly Pleasures, and shall I indulge myself in Gratifications here below ? ” Every Thing appears to a true Christian as not worthy to be compared with the Glory that shall hereafter be revealed ; and he will surely set his Heart most upon that which he hath the greatest Affection for.

Fourthly, A righteous Man is willing to have his Hopes proved and tried. This is the Temper of every true Christian ; and that is his Language, *Search me, O God, and know my Heart ; try me, and know my Thoughts*. When Persons have any Prospect that they are Heirs to a worldly Estate, what Pains will they not take to see that their Title be good and indisputable ; and if we have any Reason to think we are Heirs to an heavenly Inheritance, shall we not rather double our Diligence, that our Hope may not fail us ? Now all true Believers have an indisputable Right to the Glories of Heaven : Indeed it may not appear indisputable to them, and therefore they will accomplish a diligent Search, that they may be fully satisfied as to the Matter. The

Marks

Marks of Grace made known in the Gospel, are sure and evident Tokens of Christianity ; and he that is justly concerned in this Matter, will be careful to examine himself by these Evidences. Whether this is not a reasonable Thought, my Brethren, judge ye. True Christians will improve every Opportunity to get an Insight into this Matter : They will seriously attend the Ministry of the Word, that they may be acquainted with the Truth of their Hopes : They will not think it hard if the Ministers of the Gospel lay themselves out to prove them, and try them : They have Hearts open to Conviction, and are willing to know the worst of themselves that they may amend what is amiss : They consider of how great Importance it is, that their Title to Heaven be good, and are willing to have their Claims searched to the Bottom : They will leave no Stone without turning it, no Method without proving it. “ O, says the Believer, “ Let but my Title to Heaven be “ good, and I value not the Pains I must take. ”

But we come,

Thirdly, To consider *the Hope of the righteous Man, as it is exercised at Death. The Righteous hath Hope in his Death.* The near Approach of Death is generally the trying Time for the Hope of Man : If our Hopes that now ease and support us, will not stand the Test in a dying Hour, we have Reason to fear that they are false and delusory. If our Hopes are rightly founded, they will exert themselves at the near View of Eternity. There is a vast Difference between the Hopes of a righteous and an unrighteous Man at Death : Both may have Hopes ; but the Hopes of both are not founded upon the same Bottom.

Let a wicked Man, when he is on the Brink of the Grave, examine into the Grounds of his Confidence ;

and he will have little reason to conclude any thing comfortable concerning himself. He may trust in the Mercy of God ; but as he must find that he hath no Title to the Mercy of God, by Virtue of any Faith in Christ, which he finds in him, he hath melancholy Reason to conclude that his Title is not good : He knows he hath not submitted to Christ in the Gospel Way ; and therefore he sees that his Hopes are groundless.

But, Let a Christian when he is on the Brink of the Grave, enquire into the Foundation of his Hope, and he will experience that he hath had a Work of Grace wrought in him, which revives his Soul. Indeed he may not have a sure and certain Hope of this ; but he will find such Experience of divine Operation that he will not dare to conclude that he is not a Christian : The past Experience which he hath had, will now encourage him : He cannot absolutely deny God's former Dealings with him ; and as he cannot, he will have some Hopes. Accordingly we find, that every one passing out of Time into Eternity, that hath been favoured with the converting Influence of the Spirit, cannot reject the Evidence. Though he may not have Assurance ; yet he hath Hope : His doubtful Expectations will lead him to examine himself ; and he cannot deny the Operations of God upon his Soul. Some at Death have Assurance ; all true Christians have the Faith of Adherence : They would not part with that hope they have for Millions of Worlds : They in a good Measure rejoice in God as their God in Covenant : Though their Faith may be small, yet it is sure. They rejoice in Christ as their Saviour ; and though they cannot actually call him their own, yet they dare not say that he is not their's : They rejoice in the Spirit ; and though they cannot with Confidence call him their Comforter, yet at the same time they cannot deny his Operations upon their Hearts. They have
some

some Degree of substantial Comfort, which the wicked Man hath not. The Scriptures say, *That Eye hath not seen, nor hath Ear heard what God hath laid up for those that love him* : And all Believers having some Evidence of this Love, cannot but rejoice in some Degree. By Faith they behold Heaven as their's, and all the Happiness of it : If Believers have not this Hope, who can lay Claim to it ? If those who have had a Work of Grace wrought in them, cannot take the Comfort of it, how can those who are graceless. True Christians have good Reason to look upon Death as a conquered Enemy, and upon Heaven as unalterably their's.

Fourthly, *None but the Righteous can have a good Hope.* We have already considered Man as in a deplorable Condition by the Fall, having no Righteousness and Strength in him, having violated God's holy Law. We have said, That Man cannot be justified by the first Covenant, the Covenant of Works ; and that those who are justified must be made righteous according to the Covenant of Grace : Will it not from hence follow that Justification is not by the Law but by Grace ? Faith, is unalterably fixed as the Condition of Salvation ; and how can Unbelievers be justified, or made righteous seeing they have not believed in Christ ? And how can they have a good Hope, unless they have good Reason to think that they are justified ? Every Unbeliever is condemned in the Word of God : therefore no Unbeliever can have a well-grounded Hope. Sinners may talk of their Obedience, and Willingness to be saved by Christ, as long and as much as they please, but unless their Willingness to be saved, engageth them to embrace Christ's Righteousness as the Grounds of their Salvation, they cannot have any scriptural Hopes : *Christ is the End of the Law for Righteousness, to all them that believe.* It must then be Faith in Christ's Righteousness that gives spring to a rational, substantial Hope. This Faith

Faith is either a Condition, or it is not ; our Compliance or Non-compliance with it must make us happy or miserable ; otherwise God trifles with his Creatures, which we ought not to suppose ; and there would be no need of a Condition, if we could have a good Hope, or be saved without it, certainly then it always preceeds a firm Hope in Man.

The APPLICATION now lies before us.

And,

First, Let us examine ourselves as to the Reason of that Hope which is in us. No doubt all of us here before God, hope for Salvation ; but is there a true and false Hope ? Oh let us be careful that we are not deceived : It is not long before we must all appear at the Judgment Seat of Christ, and then we shall be thro'ly tried. Are our Hopes well grounded ? Are we in the Number of righteous Persons ? Have we Reason to think that we are justified ? Have we been brought under a Work of Conviction by the Spirit of God, and been made to see that according to the first Covenant we are Sinners, and righteously condemned ? Have we been brought to see that we are poor, wretched, miserable, blind and naked ? Have we been emptied of our selves, and been brought to lie low at the Feet of sovereign Grace, acknowledging that we are unworthy of Mercy ; and that God would be just if He should cast us off forever ? Hath this Discovery lead us to seek for Salvation in the Gospel, wherein Christ is revealed as a suitable and al sufficient Saviour ? Have we consulted the Terms of Salvation, that they are forsaking ourselves, and relying upon Christ alone for Salvation ? And have we accordingly submitted to those Terms ? Can we upon Examination call Christ our Righteousness ; and can we say, that all our Hopes are founded upon Christ ?

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Let us examine further into the Effects which this Hope produceth in us. Doth it influence us to labour after Holiness? Doth it purify our Hearts, and work by Love, Love towards God, towards Christ, towards Holiness, and the Brethren? Doth this Hope make us humble in our own Eyes? Doth it wean us from the World, and teach us the incomparableness of it to the future Glory? Are we willing to have our Hopes proved? Are we concerned lest we should be deceived with a false Hope? Do we labour by examining the Word of God, by Prayer, and attending the Ministry of the Word, to see that our Hopes are well grounded? Be not deceived, my Brethren, a solicitous Concern should always accompany this Matter: Every true Christian is sensible of the Deceitfulness of his Heart, and therefore labours to secure an Hope, of which he shall never have Occasion to be ashamed. Look well to yourselves, and remember that this Matter is of everlasting Concernment.

Secondly, We may infer *the Blessedness of the Righteous.* They have sure and certain Hopes of Comfort here and hereafter. They can entertain this joyful Reflection that *leaving their own Righteousness, they have embraced the Righteousness of God, which is by Faith in Christ Jesus.* Their Hope is built upon him, who is the Rock of Ages; and Christ like a Rock is sure and abiding. Amidst the many Troubles which pass over you, O Believer, you may cast Anchor in Christ, who hath enter'd for you within the Vail: The Righteousness of Christ being imputed to you, you need not fear with any Amazement. When Christ's Righteousness was imputed to you, Christ was given to you also; and in him you have all that a Christian can desire. Christ is your's to teach you, Christ is your's to intercede for you, Christ is your's to sanctify you: And be of good Comfort, Christ is your's at Death: He will give you
such

such Aids, which though they may not assure you of Salvation, yet will afford you great Matter of Joy. Endeavour to grow more acquainted with Christ, and he will be more acquainted with you ; and rejoice in this that He whom you now long after, will be the Object of your perpetual Enjoyment.

Thirdly, We gather that *all unrighteous Persons are very miserable*. They are without Hope, not having submitted themselves to the Righteousness of Christ : And being destitute of this Hope, they have no good Prospect before them. The Anger of God is revealed against them, and the Righteousness of Christ, unless embraced will be an Aggravation of their Misery. You cannot, O Sinner, be happy ; for you are yet in your Sins, and Christ cannot be in you, the Hope of Glory hereafter. You may have some Sparks of Hope ; but unless you repent, and believe in Christ, they will enkindle the Flames of Hell, and make them to burn the more furiously.

Fourthly, If the Righteous have Hope in their Death, then *mourning Ones may be comforted, that their righteous Relatives and Friends who have died, are gone to the upper World of Enjoyment*. There all Believer's Hopes terminate ; and those who are gone thither, carry Joy with them, and leave Occasion of Joy behind them. Have we lost desirable Friends and Relatives ? And have we Reason to think that they died embracing Christ's Righteousness ? Let us not be fearful and unbelieving about them : Their Death is our Loss, but our Loss is their Gain. Did they die expressing Faith in Christ and his Righteousness ? It should teach us the Preciousness of Christ ; and of how great Benefit it is to be interested in Christ. Let us learn, my Brethren, from what we have seen and heard of the Faith of those that have died, to lay a Foundation for the same Security

at Death. God hath been pleased of late to repeat Instances of Mortality among us : He hath taken away one and another, concerning whom we have good Reason to hope. A dear *Pastor* hath been lately removed from us : And where are many besides that used to accompany us in this Place of Worship ? They are dead, and they died in Hope ! The Honour of God and Religion obliges us to mention one Instance of Mortality, that God hath set before us : We mean the Death of the vertuous and amiable Madam HUTCHINSON, to whom some of us paid our Funeral Respects the last Week. We have great Reason to think that She was one whom God made righteous, by imputing his Son's Righteousness to her ; and we have this confirmed in her *good Hope* at Death : She lived a righteous, and died like a justified Person : She was asked the Morning before she died, Whether she had a good Hope as to that World she was just entering into ? She replied, " I gave my self up to God many Years ago ; and now God, by the Smiles of his Countenance, gives me abundant Reason to think that I did it in Sincerity. " Her Christian Temper appeared through the Course of her Life : Her steady and serious Piety at Home in her Family and Closet, appeared to those who were most with her ; as they are ready to testify. She endeavoured to approve herself unto God, by walking closely with Him. The Hopes which she entertained of the Happiness of Heaven were such as influenced her in her whole Behaviour : She was a prudent discreet Wife, a tender Mother, and a hearty Friend : She treated all about her with a peculiar Pleasancy and Freedom : What is best of all is, that she was a *Christian*. God approved her ; and shall we not approve of those whom the Lord approveth. When she was seized with her last Illness, which was but a few Days before she died, tho' Providence placed her in wealthy Circumstances, and in the midst of many pleasant Comforts,

she was willing to leave all for Christ. She had a better Hope and Prospect than this World can afford. She had the Evidences of Grace, and these are better than all worldly Riches. Her Faith in future Glory was strong and active, and this elevated her Hopes. She said with Freedom and Alacrity, that she was not afraid to die; and how could she be afraid, when she had such a Hope. What a mighty Spring of Consolation is this.

You, *honoured Sir*, Who have the greatest Share in this Bereavement, have no Occasion to mourn without Hope. God was pleased to favour you with a long Continuance together, and no doubt this made it more difficult and irksome to part; but, Did your deceased *Consort* leave Grounds to hope that she was among the Righteous? Did she exercise the *Hope of the righteous*, in her dying Moments? You may then mix Tears of Joy in this Cup of Affliction. We praise the Grace of God seen in you at this Time; and pray that you may have an abundant Supply of the Spirit to adorn your Character as a Christian, especially in this Day of Adversity. May your Graces shine bright and clear! May they be purified in this Furnace of Affliction! And when God shall see fit to take you out of this Life, we cannot wish any thing better than that you may have Hope in your Death, and after Death have your Hope swallowed up in Enjoyment! May the Children whom God hath given you; be spared to be the Comfort of your advanced Years! May they be led to imitate the Virtues, and Copy after the Example of their deceased Mother, as she copied after Christ! May *the Son be as a Plant, grown up in his Youth*; and *the Daughters be as Corner-Stones, polished after the Similitude of a Palace*!

Fifthly, If we would be possessed of a good Hope, let us labour after *the Righteousness of Christ, to be imputed to us*. I trust we are convinced that Hopes
built

built upon any other Foundation are no better than the Hopes of the Hypocrite ; and if our Hopes are of this Kind, what shall we do and say, when God taketh away our Souls. We conclude from Scripture, that *a Man is justified by Faith, and not by the Deeds of the Law*, certainly then those who are not righteous in this Way, can't have very good Hopes. Let us labour first of all after the Character of the *righteous Man* ; Let us see to it that the Righteousness of Christ becomes our's ; that we are brought to accept it, renouncing our own. O Sinner, you will want some substantial Comfort in the Hour of Death ; and nothing but this will afford it. You may now build your Hopes upon yourselves, your Prayers, and other Duties, and so make a Righteousness of them ; but it is no more than a Castle built in the Air, without any Foundation, Death will scale these high Walls of Conceit, and bring them down, and then you will be an unavoidable Prey for Satan. On the other Hand, if your Hopes are built on the Righteousness of Christ entirely, then in the near Views of Eternity you will find such Supports as you would not part with for all the Enjoyments of Life. Let this Question be much upon your Minds, What if my Hope should at last deceive me ? And let the Possibility of the Thing quicken us all to great Jealousy and Concern, And here we think it very necessary to charge and caution you, not so much as to think you are justified, unless, at the same Time, you find you are under the Influence of an Heart-purifying Hope, of an Hope that teacheth you Mortification and Self-denial, an Hope that attacheth your Affections to heavenly Things, and disposeth you to accomplish a frequent and diligent Search into your Hearts : These Things alway accompany Justification, and are of equal Necessity with it. We shall add one Passage of Scripture, as the Close of the whole, *Matthew 7. 24, — 27. Therefore, whosoever heareth these Sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken*

him unto a wise Man that built his House upon a Rock : And the Rain descended, and the Floods came, and the Wind blew, and beat upon that House, and it fell not ; for it was founded on a Rock. And every one that heareth these Sayings of mine, and doth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish Man, that built his House upon the Sand : And the Rain descended, and the Floods came, and the Winds blew, and beat upon that House, and it fell, and great was the Fall of it. I leave you, my Brethren, to apply it : May God make the effectual Application.



F I N I S.
